



TORINO PROCESS 2016-17

MONTENEGRO

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executive summary of the Torino Process 2016–17 Montenegro report.

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Acronyms

ACVT	Advisory Committee for Vocational Training
DGVT	Directors General for Vocational Training
EPALE	Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe
EQF	European Qualifications Framework
EQF NCP	European Qualifications Framework National Coordination Point
ETF	European Training Foundation
EU	European Union
HRD	Human resources development
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
MONSTAT	Montenegrin Statistical Office
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGOs	Non-governmental organisations
SMEs	Small and medium-sized enterprises
VET	Vocational education and training
WBL	Work-based learning

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1. Introduction

The European Union (EU) has opened 24 chapters with Montenegro in the bilateral policy dialogue on accession. At national level, Montenegro is making good progress with the enlargement agenda¹. At regional level², Montenegro has signed up to the Berlin Process, including the connectivity agenda and the Positive Agenda for Youth. Elections took place on 16 October 2016 and a new government is in place. In 2016, Montenegro celebrated 10 years of independence and is expected to join NATO in spring 2017.

The World Bank's *Doing Business Report 2016*³ points to 1.4% economic growth in the Western Balkans, with Montenegro at 3.2%⁴ (before the 2008 financial crisis it was at 10%). Foreign direct investment stands at 15–20%, mainly in infrastructure and transport (before the financial crisis in 2008 it was at 30–40%). Montenegro strives to be a leader in the region (it is one of the best-developed economies in the Western Balkans) and to attract substantial foreign investment for energy, railways and roads in an effort to support the creation of new jobs.

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) make up 99% of the total number of enterprises in Montenegro. They account for 67% of total employment and generate 60% of gross domestic product (GDP). SMEs contribute significantly to economic growth and development, competitiveness and new employment⁵. Employment of graduates with third level education has grown fastest in SMEs⁶, with most jobs being created in the hospitality, food service and construction sectors. However, most growth takes place among a small proportion of SMEs, the so-called 'divokoza' or gazelles of Montenegro.

For SMEs, difficulties in doing business are caused by a lack of financial means and very unfavourable conditions for obtaining loans from the commercial banks. This gap in funding is partly replaced with the credit activities of public institutions (primarily the Investment Development Fund).

¹ Enlargement Package 2016.

² Regional Cooperation Council, South East Europe 2020 Strategy, 2013.

³ World Bank, *Doing Business Report 2016*.

⁴ Chamber of Economy of Montenegro, Economic Conference, Budva, October 2016.

⁵ Chamber of Economy of Montenegro, Montenegrin economy in 2015: Proposals for measures to improve the business environment.

⁶ European Commission, Directorate-General for Education and Culture, *Study on higher education provision and labour market opportunities in the Western Balkans*, Country report Montenegro, 2016.

The informal economy and global competition are also barriers to doing local business; in addition, foreign workers, goods and services have a strong presence.

An important challenge for long-term economic growth is the ageing population, which reduces the labour supply and puts pressure on the sustainability of the pension and healthcare system. Demographic trends for the period 2010–2016 show that the workforce is ageing. The number of people in the 45–49 age group decreased by 8.1% between 2010 and 2016. There has also been a decrease of 3.3% in the 50–54 age group (data from the Montenegrin Statistical Office (MONSTAT), population estimations). At the same time, the number of people in the 55–59 age group increased by 4.1% during the same period (2010–2016). This means that, in the last seven years, Montenegro has seen an ageing of the working-age population, with decreases in the 45–49 and 50–54 age groups, and increases in the 55–59 and 60–64 age group. The increase in the 60–64 age group was particularly significant (+31.8%).

The labour market in Montenegro is characterised by high youth unemployment. One in five young people (aged 15–24) in Montenegro is not in employment, education or training (NEET). According to the latest MONSTAT data available (Labour Force Survey, 2015), the total unemployment rate amounted to 17.5% compared to over 37% among young people. Of the total number of unemployed people, 24.79% completed some form of tertiary education. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) study (2015⁷) on youth transition from school to work shows that only a quarter of young people are employed and the biggest barrier to finding a job is the lack of vacancies. On average, it takes a young person almost two years to find their first stable or satisfactory job. One-third of registered unemployed people are first-time jobseekers (Employment Agency of Montenegro, 2015).

On 30 January 2016, Montenegro submitted its Economic Reform Programme 2016–2018 (European Semester Light) to the European Commission. In its 2016 assessment, the European Commission considered that Montenegro had partially addressed recommendation number 5 issued in 2015, namely to actively continue education reform with a view to better aligning education and skills with labour market needs and strengthening cooperation between education and business. In the 2016 Economic Reform Programme cycle, Montenegro specified measure 17, the development of qualifications based on learning outcomes in accordance with the needs of the labour market, as a priority reform. On 25 May 2016, the Council of the European Union adopted the Draft Joint Conclusions of the Economic and Financial Dialogue between the EU and the Western Balkans and Turkey. Major obstacles to growth and competitiveness in Montenegro include high long-term unemployment and low labour market participation of young people and women. In order to address this challenge, Montenegro is invited to implement strategies to align education and skills policies with labour market needs.

As a follow-up to the 2014 Torino Process, this report provides an analysis of the current situation. Its main findings are grouped into four sections. These sections address a vision and strategy for vocational education and training (VET); economic and labour market demand; social and inclusion demand; internal efficiency of the VET system. Governance-related issues are an integral part of the four sections and particular attention is paid to the challenge of bringing education and the world of work closer together. Finally, the authors propose recommendations for priority actions that can address the gaps and advance the VET sector as a whole in the coming two years.

⁷ ILO Transition Study, 2015.

2. Main findings

Montenegro was the first country in the Western Balkans to implement the foresight exercise (FRAME)⁸, as part of the preparation for the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) II, which entails developing a comprehensive human resources development (HRD) strategic vision for 2020. The country's Skills Vision 2020, developed with the education and employment sectors, has informed the Employment, Social Policies and Human Resource Development section of the European Commission's Country Strategy Paper 2014–2020. It also informs the VET Development Strategy (2015–2020), the Employment and Social Reform Programme (2015–2020) and the National Employment Strategy (2016–2020). The Strategy for Lifelong Entrepreneurial Learning (2014–2019) and the Strategy for Adult Education (2015–2025) also reflect Skills Vision 2020. A strategy for lifelong career guidance was recently adopted. Other recent strategies also include the Strategy for Development of Higher Education (2016–2020) and Strategy for Early and Preschool Education (2016–2020). While this is a comprehensive policy framework, the implementation of reform is a well-acknowledged challenge for the country.

VET has a long tradition in Montenegro and the vast majority of students attend VET institutions (67% of students in secondary education). However, the latest data shows that there is a decline in the interest shown by students in courses that lead to employment. In 2006, there were 6 000 students in higher education; in 2016, there were 22 000.

Lifelong learning is high on the government's agenda, and Montenegro is making good progress in relation to the accession agenda, as proved by:

- signature of the Riga Declaration on 22 June 2015;
- membership of the European Alliance for Apprenticeship in June 2015;
- an active contribution to EU debates with regular participation in DGVT, ACVT and EQF Advisory Group⁹ meetings;
- active participation by the Ministry of Education in the Directorate-General for Education and Culture's Platform for Education and Training;
- good results in the Erasmus+ programme;
- active participation in the Riga ex ante assessment with work-based learning as the main policy option.

Bridging the gap between labour market needs and the education and training system is the government's top priority in addressing structural unemployment¹⁰. Employers report an imbalance between the skills and knowledge that students acquire in the education system and those required by the labour market. The supply of educational profiles does not match employers' demands¹¹.

The Montenegrin Chamber of Economy's analysis of outdated occupations in Montenegro indicates that there is a lack of vocational graduates in the following areas: electrical engineering, thermal engineering, hydro engineering, construction, metallurgy and metal processing, textiles, traffic and

⁸ The Ministry of Labour in Montenegro led the FRAME project (an IPA project involving the Western Balkans and Turkey, managed by the ETF).

⁹ Directors General for Vocational Education and Training, Advisory Committee for Vocational Training, European Qualifications Framework.

¹⁰ Data from the Employment Agency and MONSTAT.

¹¹ Economic Reform Programme, Montenegro, January 2015.

energetics. These branches are perceived as engines for economic development¹² with substantial growth potential.

Despite the fact that there are a significant number of unemployed people, Montenegro is a major importer of labour, particularly to meet the needs of employers during the tourist, construction and agricultural season. It should be noted that these jobs are considered unattractive, as almost 90% of vacancies reported to the Employment Agency are for a limited duration.

To address skills mismatches, the employment sector continues to work on identifying skills needs based on the annual employers' survey conducted by the Employment Agency. This is one of the most important instruments for identifying skills needs and acts as a guide for training and employment service delivery. Results are shared and discussed among employment and education stakeholders. The IPA project, Active Labour Market Measures for Employability (2012–2013), includes a component on skills supply and demand. It also focuses on identifying skills needs in various sectors, which could feed into the development of occupational and qualification standards in specific fields.

The Ministry of Education also launched a pilot tracer study of VET students in 2015. Out of 1 994 students who completed the questionnaire, 898 were still in education, 438 were employed, 616 were unemployed and 42 were self-employed in their own or family business. According to the data, the majority of students continue their education, mostly at related faculties and post-secondary schools. An increasing number of students continue their education abroad. Students and their families recognise the significance of entrepreneurship, as shown by the fact that 42 students are involved in private business, in most cases, their family business.

In order to prepare suitable educational offerings and to adapt qualifications to labour market demands, employers have been involved in qualification development from the beginning. By working with the education sector and participating in working groups, sector commissions, boards and councils, employers help to decide, for example, which initiatives for revising existing qualifications or developing new qualifications should be adopted, which learning outcomes are adequate for certain qualifications and whether assessment criteria are adequate.

In addition, the higher education sector follows up on the employment outcomes of its graduates on a pilot basis. It does so in an effort to improve the quality of higher education and to deliver more effective career counselling.

MONSTAT is also an important provider of information on labour force trends, based on regular labour force surveys (the latest being 2015) and its collaboration with the ILO in implementing a school-to-work transition survey.

The employers' association, the Montenegrin Employers Federation, also conducts a biannual skills needs analysis.

The National Strategy for Employment 2016–2020 builds on the priorities and actions identified in the Employment and Social Reform Programme to address structural unemployment. The Employment Agency follows up with a wide range of measures through continuing education and training programmes, public work, the promotion of entrepreneurship and mediation in the recruitment process. Specific projects have been designed and are currently being implemented to facilitate young people's insertion in employment. Such projects include: Stop the Grey Economy programme; Career Orientation and Labour Market in Elementary Schools and High Schools programme; and The Youth

¹² Chamber of Economy of Montenegro, Montenegrin economy in 2015: Proposals for measures to improve the business environment.

are Our Potential, Let's Give Them a Chance programme. However, funding and reaching out to those who are most vulnerable (young people, socially excluded people) remains a big challenge. The IPA project, Active Labour Market Measures for Employability (2012–2013), operates under the auspices of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. It seeks to address the various gaps by focusing on improving cooperation between employment offices, municipalities and other actors at local level so that they can deliver tailored activation services to jobseekers and vulnerable social groups. Most active labour market policies are subsidised employment schemes. There is little (re)training and few startup incentives (mainly due to underfunding). This is worrying, as most unemployed people have a low level of education or have mismatched qualification profiles that do not meet the requirements of the labour market.

An assessment of the effectiveness of active labour market programmes in Montenegro conducted by the World Bank¹³ showed that the large-scale university graduate internship scheme triggered some adverse effects: the scheme had a limited impact on employment probability and was abused by some employers.

Giving young people an opportunity to take part in exchanges with other countries in the region and professional mobility are considered important factors in increased employability. The Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO), launched in Tirana on 8 December 2016, could be an asset in this process.

Montenegro continues to implement its Strategy of Inclusive Education (2014–2018). Recent developments demonstrate progress in working with children and young people with special education needs. There is also better cooperation at local level and more guidance in the education system. A system and database for children and students with developmental difficulties have been set up at central and local level. It categorises students by type and by disability so that they can be included in the education process in a timely and suitable manner. Input into the central database in the Montenegrin Education Information System is ongoing: 3 085 students with special educational needs and 1 807 proposals for tailored integration into the education system (2015/2016 school year).

Eighteen commissions were established at local community level to guide children into the education system. The commissions propose the educational programme, additional expert assistance and required staff, facilities, material and other conditions needed for a suitable educational process. Commission members benefited from subject-related training and guidance material to improve the efficiency of the work and full compliance with inclusiveness values. Based on the commissions' recommendations, the education institutions develop individual developmental/educational programmes (IDEP) for every child. Individual transition plans, in terms of professional orientation and preparation for employment and independent life, are also prepared for all future graduates with disabilities.

In order to organise and support the implementation of inclusive education in schools, so-called resource centres (11 selected schools) have been chosen throughout the whole of Montenegro. Resource teams for visiting schools with special classes have been formed.

In addition, a network to support inclusive education in general secondary education has been established as part of the Council of Europe's Regional Network of Support for Inclusive Education project. It covers four schools and four regions. The following topics were reviewed: the concept of inclusion, the use of indexes of inclusiveness, the preparation of school inclusion plans. School tours have been conducted and an action plan to promote inclusion in secondary schools has been developed.

¹³ World Bank, Assessment of Active Labor Market Programs in Montenegro, Technical Note, 2014.

The Montenegro Bureau for Education has published an accredited catalogue of programmes for teacher training programmes that cover inclusion. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have also been involved, mainly in raising awareness of inclusive education. During 2015 and in April 2016 the Bureau for Education organised 25 seminars on the subject of inclusive education; 630 teachers attended the seminars. Teacher training programmes for teachers who work with students with autism have also been accredited by the National Council for Education.

In the last two years, 17 new education programmes for acquiring vocational qualifications and 24 new education programmes for acquiring relevant qualifications or skills have been adopted. Examples include four programs for visually impaired persons in order to gain key digital competences, i.e. use of braille alphabet software, and three programmes aimed at trainers to use hippotherapy when working with children with special needs. Two programmes to provide the Roma and Egyptian population with vocational qualifications in the health and education system were adopted.

On 24 March 2016, the Montenegrin parliament approved the Strategy for Social Inclusion of Roma and Egyptians (2016–2020) and an action plan.

Unemployment among the Roma and Egyptian population remains an important issue. A lack of qualifications or a low level of qualification is one of the main impediments to taking up a job. The Employment Agency targets Roma and Egyptians as a priority category. A lack of funds and insufficient accompanying measures (e.g. education, housing) and the problem of discriminatory attitudes make activation difficult. At the Employment Agency's request, the Centre for Vocational Education (hereinafter 'VET Centre') developed several training programmes for specific occupations. A growing number of NGOs have licensed their training programmes and rolled them out through projects financed by the Fund for Professional Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with Disabilities. The Ministry of Education provided free exams for 12 adult Roma and Egyptian community members who acquired the vocational school diploma at level IV. During the 2015/2016 school year, the scholarship programme included 76 students of the Roma and Egyptian population who attended classes at 21 secondary schools in Montenegro (35 females and 41 males). A total of 24 students were enrolled in the first grade of secondary school for the first time.

Efforts to improve social integration by promoting employment continues to rely mainly on the IPA funding mentioned above. A service contract focuses on cooperation between the Employment Agency and welfare centres in Montenegro with a view to activating the most vulnerable people in the labour market (those with disabilities and the Roma and Egyptian minority). It also includes a grant scheme designed to provide training and employment opportunities to these vulnerable groups.

Since the last round of the Torino Process in 2014, progress has been made regarding the internal efficiency of the VET system in bringing education and the world of work closer together.

In relation to work-based learning (WBL), the Law on VET allows for the provision of internships in companies. However, many VET schools have difficulties in finding partners in the world of work. As a consequence, most vocational practice still takes place in VET school workshops. There are also significant regional disparities, with VET schools in the north of Montenegro often struggling to secure sufficient WBL opportunities for their students¹⁴. On the plus side, however, some VET schools in the central and coastal areas of Montenegro are involved with more than 50 companies in delivering WBL for their tourism programmes. In most cases, schools take the initiative to approach employers they have identified as potential partners in the practical learning process for their students.

To improve the quality of cooperation with employers in providing practical education, positions for the organisers of practical education have been introduced in all schools. A regional project (covering

¹⁴ Riga ex-ante assessment: Montenegro, 2016.

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro), initiated with the help of KulturKontakt Austria, addresses the role and responsibilities of the organisers of practical training and supports these developments. The right conditions also need to be created in companies to enable students to develop the necessary skills and competences, and allow for the promotion of entrepreneurship. This includes criteria that employers have to fulfil in order to train students and in-company instructors who have the pedagogical knowledge required to work with students. In this regard, there is active cooperation between the Ministry of Education, the Chamber of Economy and the Montenegrin Employers Federation. A portal to improve cooperation between employers and schools in the implementation of practical training has been set up with the support of KulturKontakt Austria. The monitoring and evaluation of the quality of internships have been identified as another important challenge.

Schools have different ways of motivating social partners and employers to become involved in the planning, organisation and realisation of practical education and training. For example, they involve social partners and employers in the development of planning documents for the work done in schools; they include employers on school boards; they publicise activities in schools through open door days; they update the information on school websites; they include employers directly in the practical training conducted in schools; they encourage employers to create contracts for the implementation and organisation of practical training; they invite successful employers to be guests in schools.

Montenegro's VET Development Strategy 2015–2020¹⁵ (National VET Strategy) stresses the development of qualifications based on learning outcomes. This should also lead to improved practical training for VET students by providing a clear definition in the curricula of how much time should be spent on WBL with employers. This strategy recommends a number of measures to improve the practical training and involvement of employers within the existing internship system (there are currently no plans for an apprenticeship system) to overcome the skills gap. These measures include:

- involving intermediary institutions, employers' institutions and associations (Chambers of Commerce, Union of Employers, tourism associations);
- engaging intermediary institutions in quality assurance for WBL, career guidance in partnership with employers, promotion of WBL;
- training instructors to deliver practical learning in enterprises;
- developing a stimulating environment for employer engagement;
- developing sectoral WBL models.

In addition, based on the Riga ex ante impact assessment¹⁶, the Ministry of Education has identified the improvement of the WBL-related database as another key priority and will work on this with the European Training Foundation (ETF) in 2017.

Norms and processes have been developed to support the internal and external evaluation of schools and to promote quality assurance with regard to the teaching and learning process. These would need to be simplified in order for them to be used in internal evaluation. The methodology and indicators that have been established comply with EQAVET (European Quality Assurance in VET) principles. Suitable mechanisms to engage social partners in VET quality assurance, such as a regular needs

¹⁵ Strategy for the development of vocational education in Montenegro (2015–2020).

¹⁶ Riga ex ante assessment: Montenegro, 2016.

analysis, remain a challenge. The Centre for Professional Development is currently undertaking work on the criteria and processes required for the evaluation of schools.

In 2015 and 2016, external evaluation teams appointed by the VET Centre and the Bureau of Education Services conducted evaluations in 19 vocational schools and 4 adult education institutions (primary schools for adults). The authors of this report have details of the evaluation. Based on the analysis, a proposal on the organisation and implementation of practical education in vocational school has been made.

The VET Centre has also started to monitor 60 providers of adult education. Its aim is to determine the actual conditions in which the providers work, ascertain how educational programmes are implemented and determine the exact number of certificates issued by adult education providers. The pre-monitoring phase consisted of interviews with school principals and the completion of evaluation forms.'

Montenegro is ahead of many EU countries in referencing. The IPA programme, Modernisation of Educational Programmes and Teacher Training (HRD OP 2012–2013), run under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, has an important component on the further development of qualifications and curricula. This is in line with the Economic Reform Programme, which calls for Montenegro's sectoral committees to develop qualifications that are more relevant for employment. The sectoral committees, which comprise both public and private partners, develop qualifications in five areas relevant to economic development. These areas include tourism, agriculture and mechatronics. This is accompanied by teacher training on new teaching methodologies and equipment delivery in selected schools. As a European Qualifications Framework National Coordination Point (EQF NCP), the Ministry of Education conducted a project entitled 2015 Financial Support for the EQF NCP in Montenegro within the framework of the Erasmus+ programme in 2015. Furthermore, the Europass 2016 and 2016 Support for the EQF NCP in Montenegro projects were also approved.

Montenegro does relatively well in quantitative terms when it comes to teacher training: only 20% of VET teachers had no training at all in the last 12 months (compared to the OECD figure of 10–15%)¹⁷. However, 50% of teachers say that the continuing professional development offered is not relevant. Only 41% of vocational teachers reported that they participated in continuing professional development related to their vocational specialisation in the last 12 months. More specialised capacity to provide VET is needed. Teachers' practical experience in industry will be increasingly important. A teacher placement programme, led by the Ministry of Education, the Chamber of the Economy and the VET Centre, and supported by the ETF, was piloted in 2016 and will be extended to 70 vocational teachers nationwide in 2017. There is a commitment to encouraging more collaboration and the sharing of materials by vocational teachers so that good initiatives, such as those described in relation to new pedagogies, can be shared.

A variety of teacher training initiatives were recently organised by different organisations and projects that were present in Montenegro, e.g. DVV, GIZ, LUX-Development, KulturKontakt, British Council, ETF. Ten new curricula in five sectors are under development within the framework of the IPA Modernisation of Education project run by the Ministry of Education. Their introduction will be supported by a brief period of training and the delivery of equipment. However, further support is needed to ensure the successful adoption of the curricula. It will be important to become familiar with the new equipment that will be delivered to support teachers in their work so that a conducive learning environment is created based on this investment in the schools.

¹⁷ ETF review on teacher training, 2015.

The recently adopted Teacher Training Strategy (2017–2024) focuses on the implementation of measures that include the provision of high-quality initial teacher training, system support at the beginning of the teaching career, and the continuing professional development of teachers. These factors are important for motivating young people to opt for the teaching profession and to ensure that teachers possess and maintain the relevant competences they need to be effective in today's classrooms.

The ageing teaching population, which is expected to lead to shortages, presents a challenge. At the same time, this can be considered as an opportunity to revamp teacher training in a modern teaching environment that is responsive to the labour market. PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) results confirm that teachers in the STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) disciplines will be required to support the economic development and the implementation of Montenegro's priorities. Montenegro also plans to be part of TIMSS (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study) for increased evidence-based policy making in teaching and learning.

With regard to the implementation of the Strategy for Lifelong Entrepreneurial Learning (2015–2019), the recent Eurydice report, *Entrepreneurship Education at School in Europe*¹⁸, and the 2015 Small Business Act (SBA)¹⁹ assessment, show good progress with integrating key entrepreneurship competences into the education system, including VET. The policy commitment is supported by cooperation with the National Partnership for Entrepreneurial Learning. Further mainstreaming of entrepreneurship as a key competence and making sustainable changes to teacher training remain a challenge.

The inclusion of entrepreneurship as a key competence in teaching plans and programmes for *gymnasium* education and general education subjects in secondary vocational schools is implemented through the development of 'inter-subject' areas. Entrepreneurship is part of the curriculum as an obligatory or elective subject in all four-year vocational programmes. Entrepreneurial knowledge and competences are taught through various subjects and additional activities in three-year vocational programmes. The entrepreneurship module will be obligatory for all sectors when the vocational curricula are modularised²⁰. As a part of the preparation for the implementation of these programmes, teachers will be trained so that they in turn can teach students the necessary vocational and key competences.

In four-year educational programmes, students in all four grades have three classes a week in their native language and a foreign language; in three-year educational programmes, they have three classes a week in first grade and two classes a week in second and third grade. Informatics is taught as a subject on all educational programmes, with two classes a week in first grade. In many of the four-year educational programmes, students in senior grades study subjects that link vocational subjects to informatics. The relevant council also develops and accredits educational programmes for learning and improving adult computer literacy.

Career guidance is provided mainly by eight Centres for Professional Information and Guidance. These operate in Employment Agency offices throughout the whole territory of Montenegro. These centres provide a wide range of career guidance information and services to future pupils and students, unemployed and employed individuals, and others²¹.

¹⁸ European Commission, Eurydice, *Entrepreneurship Education at School in Europe*, 2015.

¹⁹ European Commission, SEECEL, ETF, OECD, EBRD, *SME Policy Index Western Balkans and Turkey 2016*.

²⁰ Bureau for Education, *Our School: Methodological guide for implementing inter-subject area – Entrepreneurial learning*, 2015.

²¹ Report on the work of the Employment Agency of Montenegro for 2015.

Career guidance is also provided in elementary education to acquaint students and their parents with different professional trends and career possibilities in vocational education. Every year, schools organise open door days in preparation for student enrolment. Career guidance activities are also conducted in vocational schools. The IPA programme, Modernisation of Educational Programmes and Teacher Training (HRD OP 2012–2013), run by the Ministry of Education, also looks into the development of a career guidance strategy (2016–2020).

In the case of adult learning, 3% of 25–64-year-olds participated in lifelong learning programmes. This clearly indicates the need for further work on strengthening lifelong learning, both in terms of promoting it and practically applying it, in order to increase the participation of adults in lifelong learning programmes. There is a common understanding that vocational education programmes should be more modularised and based on learning outcomes. This would allow adults without qualifications, or with qualifications for which there is no demand in the labour market, to obtain a specific professional qualification to add to the knowledge they have already acquired and thus improve their position in the labour market.

As part of the EPAL²² National Support Service for Montenegro project, a one-day training course was held on 22 April 2016 for representatives of adult education stakeholders. Sixteen participants attended the course. The objectives of the training were to present the EPAL project in Montenegro; promote the EPAL community at a national level; register participants on the EPAL platform; explain the community participation rules, how the platform could be set up and how content could be searched for; and encourage the use of various sources for adult learning that are available on the platform.

To support the implementation of the adult learning strategy, a conference entitled Adult Education in Montenegro – Vision 2020 was held in Podgorica on 13 May 2016. It was organised by the VET Centre and the Ministry of Education within the framework of the EPAL National Support Service for Montenegro project. Projects such as EPAL are very important in the process of improving education quality and can help attract the attention of decision makers.

The project National Coordinator for Adult Learning, Work Plan: Montenegro is working on a guide for the non-formal learning system in Montenegro. The members of the working group preparing this document include representatives of system institutions, social partners and representatives of licensed adult education organisers. The Strategy for Lifelong Entrepreneurial Learning (2015–2019) provides for training for adults to build their capacity with regard to entrepreneurship, including training for startups.

3. Recommendations for action

Based on the above-mentioned findings and in line with the Vocational Education Development Strategy (2015–2020) and the Riga conclusions, the priorities for reform for the next two-year period include:

- revising existing educational programmes and developing new programmes based on learning outcomes;
- creating conditions for work-based learning in all sectors and enhancing its quality;
- ensuring that students develop vocational and key competences for life and work;

²² Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe.

- giving graduates more work experience in study programmes;
- improving initial and continuing teacher education;
- reinforcing entrepreneurial learning;
- defining an enrolment policy that reflects labour market needs and the demands of long-term and short-term developmental policies in Montenegro.

Priority action: Introduce work-based learning

- Organise expert discussions, by sector, to analyse situations and issues about organising and delivering (practical) education.
- Develop a database or register of employers who deliver practical education.
- Develop criteria and quality assurance mechanisms for schools and employers who deliver practical education.
- Create an enabling environment and the necessary conditions for delivering practical education at an employer.
- Develop guidelines for carrying out practical education in schools and at an employer.
- Develop guidelines for improving the quality of student achievements in practical education.
- Develop and deliver training programmes for practical education organisers and practical education instructors.
- Define incentives and tax relief for employers, making practical education and learning at the workplace feasible for students.

Priority action: Improve the professional development of VET teachers

- Prepare an analysis to improve teachers' delivery of vocational education based on the survey of the professional development of teachers, conducted with the support of the ETF, the VET Centre and the Examination Centre.
- Improve the model of continuing professional development of teachers in vocational education.
- Improve the criteria for programme accreditation for teacher development.
- Define areas for the professional development of teachers.
- Prepare catalogues for the professional development of teachers.
- Deliver teacher training in accordance with the catalogue and plan.
- Organise professional development days for teachers in schools, in accordance with the annual continuing professional development plan.
- Implement ongoing training of professional associates.
- Define a sustainable model for financing the professional development of teachers.
- Promote cooperation between schools and employers to create the conditions for teacher and assistant training in companies.

- Train teachers using EU funds for cross-border cooperation in the field of vocational education, with the aim of strengthening the mobility of teachers, assistants and other professionals in vocational education.

Priority action: Promote cooperation between education and the world of work

- Empower the private sector (in particular SMEs) to get involved in the implementation of the reform process and strategies at all territorial levels. Improve cooperation between educational institutions and SMEs by exchanging information on the staff profiles that are required and on current developments, trends and technologies to ensure a better-prepared Montenegrin labour force.
- Strengthen links between education and the information and communications technology (ICT) and tourism sectors. These sectors are important generators of new job vacancies and have the greatest potential for future employment growth. Support fast-growing micro and small firms (i.e. 'divokoza' or gazelles) in sectors that employ graduates.
- Improve career guidance services to reduce skills mismatch and encourage more graduates to start their own business.

Priority action: Cooperate regionally with education and business

- Continue being an active player in the region. This relates to regional activities within the framework of the Enlargement Package and South East Europe 2020 Strategy and related platforms like the Education and Social Affairs Platform or the Western Balkans Platform for Education and Training.

MORE INFO

To find out more about the Torino Process, compile reports, and much more, visit the Torino Process dedicated website at:

www.torinoprocess.eu

Torino Process blog: blog.torinoprocess.eu

For information on ETF activities please visit:

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